

education needs, Washington bureaucrats or American families? That is the decision that must be made.

Mr. Speaker, the best way to help improve education is to give each family more of their own money so they can choose what and how to help their children. For this to happen, President Clinton must free our children from the education bondage of special interests and sign the Education Savings Account conference report into law.

□ 1130

TRUTH IN BILLING

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the authors of the Education Rate are distressed by the current controversy, since the discount was supposed to be paid for through the hefty savings the telephone companies received as a result of deregulation, almost \$3 billion as of July 1998.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 4018 to give consumers "truth in billing." It would require a GAO report on how much money has actually been saved as a result of deregulation and how much of that savings has been passed back to consumers. In addition, it would require that those companies seeking to put additional line items on their bills reflect the full and accurate picture of both costs and savings that have resulted from the Federal regulatory action.

There is no reason for confusion. At a time when the majority of classrooms in America do not have Internet access, and when the numbers for the poor and the rural areas are even worse, it is important for Congress to cut through the confusion, keep our commitment to our schools and libraries, and most important, to America's children.

TRIBUTE TO THE COURAGE AND BRAVERY OF OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AT THURSTON HIGH SCHOOL IN SPRINGFIELD, OR

(Mr. BARR of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jake and Josh Ryker, Adam Walburger, and Doug and David Ure for their courage and bravery.

On May 21, 1998 these students witnessed a fellow classmate walk into the Thurston High School cafeteria in Springfield, Oregon, and begin shooting. Jake Ryker, after being shot through the chest, grabbed the suspect around the waist and threw him down, knocking the rifle out of his hands. His brother Josh and three other students followed Jake's lead and jumped on the suspect and held him on the floor until teachers arrived to provide assistance.

The Ryker brothers and their family attribute these boys' confidence and quick thinking to their familiarity with firearms and the training they received as Boy Scouts. I would add to this a strong family that taught these brothers courage, integrity and compassion for their fellow man.

Clearly, the actions of Jake and Josh Ryker, Adam Walburger, and Doug and David Ure saved more lives and prevented more students from being injured or killed.

Mr. Speaker, I take this moment to honor the courage and bravery of these fine young men for acting above and beyond the call of duty in defense of their fellow classmates at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon.

MANAGED CARE REFORM

(Mr. GREEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic that the same people that preached and lectured this Congress about the importance of personal responsibility and accountability for one's actions during the welfare reform bill are taking the opposite position on managed care reform.

This is really about the same thing: being accountable for the decisions we make. We should be responsible for our actions, whether one is a Member of Congress voting, a welfare recipient looking for work, or an HMO deciding not to pay for a test or a procedure that the doctor says is medically necessary.

Why should HMOs be given preferential treatment and held to a different standard than the doctors they employ or the patient that they are supposed to serve?

The Republican managed care bill will not hold HMOs accountable when they make these medical decisions.

One thing this decision does is clearly define where everyone stands on the issue. We should be fighting for a bill that requires timely internal and external appeals; access to specialists or special needs; point of service choice for employees and the patients; open communication between patients and their doctors; no gag rule; and accountability of the medical decision-maker.

We need real health care reform, not a false hope.

DOLLARS TO THE CLASSROOM ACT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek support for our Nation's children to learn and our teachers to teach by supporting H.R. 3248, the Dollars to the Classroom Act. This bill will send at least 95 cents of every Federal dollar for 31 K-through-12 education programs

to our children's classrooms. That means that \$2.7 billion will be taken from the grasp of bureaucrats and put into the hands of a teacher who knows our child's name. Mr. Speaker, that means that every classroom in America will get an additional \$425 on an average of \$9,300 per public school. I urge my colleagues to join this important effort to redistribute education tax dollars away from bureaucrats to students, parents and teachers.

Instead of paying for reports, studies, and layers of bureaucracy, I ask my colleagues to pay for teachers' salaries, textbooks, computers and other supplies. Let us put our children first, let us put their education first, let us turn rhetoric into action by passing the Dollars to the Classroom Act before our children return to school next fall.

DEMOCRATS LOVE TO TAX

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today we have heard liberal after liberal, Democrat after Democrat, excuse me, I am being redundant, speak in favor of a new \$2 billion tax increase. They are so proud of the Gore tax. Every time you call your mother, it is going to cost you a little bit more. Every time you have a medical emergency, a friend out of town, it is going to cost you more. Any time you have a loved one in California you want to call from the East Coast, it is going to cost you more, and the Democrats are so happy about it.

Why are they happy about it? Well, for one thing, any tax is a good tax. We love all taxes. Another reason they are happy: we did not have to vote on it. It got sneaked in by their comrades in the Federal bureaucracy who sneaked it in. Not one congressional vote.

I would say to my liberal colleagues, we know you like taxes. Why do we not vote on it? Since you are so proud of tax increases, why not bring this matter to the floor so that the Vice President can run on a new platform: I increased your phone taxes. I increased it for the poor people, I increased it for the old, I increased it for those on fixed incomes, and let them brag about it on the House floor.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR E-RATE

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I am gladly standing this morning in support of the E-rate. I believe this country's most valuable resource to be our children, and education is key to their development. In a world where computers are defining their very lives, our educational institutions must include technology. The genius of American education is that whether rich or poor, our children are given the opportunity to gain that knowledge.

Today, the Internet is a tremendous tool to acquire that knowledge. It brings people and ideas thousands of miles apart to a child's desktop. We cannot afford to have this technology available only in financially strong schools. Through the E-rate, those schools and libraries with limited resources are given the necessary discounts to link up with everybody else.

The attacks on the E-rate are an assault on our children's future. Our society must not be divided by those who are computer literate and those who are not.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not support E-rate, we doom and handicap our children. Americans understand and want access to technology in their children's schools, and we must all support the E-rate.

PRESIDENT SHOULD SIGN EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS LEGISLATION

(Mr. PAPPAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, the President has an opportunity to help middle class parents give their kids more opportunities in life. Congress passed legislation that would create education savings accounts, which means that middle class parents could save in tax-free accounts and use it towards their children's education. They could use it in any way that they wished, towards private schooling for extra tutoring, or for special help in meeting the needs of disabled children.

It is an insult to parents everywhere to suggest that they are incapable of saving for their children's education, and it is either naive or simply dishonest of liberals to say that the education savings accounts would not benefit poor parents because only private schools costing thousands and thousands of dollars are in existence.

Let us help parents save for their children's education. The President should sign this legislation today.

HEALTH CARE REFORM: PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS IMPORTANT FIRST STEP

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, the leadership of the majority in both the House and the other body have finally entered into the public discussion on the adoption of a "Patients' Bill of Rights."

This is an important step because it is an acknowledgment by the majority that American families are demanding protection in their dealings with Health Maintenance Organizations. It is an important step, too, because the Republican proposals will give the American people a clear choice. They can choose a Republican plan which af-

firms the rights of patients to appeal, but which appeals fall on deaf ears; and without real enforcement provisions, the Republican plan simply moves the consumer's appeal on a denial of coverage up the management ladder to a fancier wastebasket.

The Democratic plan, now that provides real enforcement. It gives you, the patient, the right to enforce all of the provisions of your HMO plan. That is why we need the Democratic Patients' Bill of Rights legislation. The Democratic proposal reaches beyond an election year quick fix to a fundamental problem by giving the consumers real power to enforce their plans.

HMOs have moved into the business of prescribing health care. The Democratic plan makes sure the HMOs are held responsible for such decisions.

CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, Americans value many things, but no value is stronger, deeper or greater than the love that a father and mother have for their children.

Mr. Speaker, no one loves their children more than their parents. Yet we see and hear more every day about how big government is coming between parents and children, about how government is stepping in without just cause and usurping parental rights.

Mr. Speaker, my office and many other offices have heard from families across the Nation that are concerned, frustrated, and even angry over government undermining their authority, and many times we feel helpless. We often find ourselves asking, what can we do about it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, today every Member of this House will have an opportunity to do something about it. Today, Mr. Speaker, parents from across the Nation will be watching our vote on the Child Custody Protection Act.

The act is simple. It says that one cannot transport minors across State lines for abortions in order to avoid notifying their parents. These are deeply held beliefs, Mr. Speaker, and today as we vote on the Child Custody Protection Act, the parents of America will be watching.

HMO REFORM

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, now that Congress is back in session, the debate over HMO reform will really begin. It will really heat up. We will hear from the Republican side of the aisle a lot of gimmicks. They will talk about health marks, and they will talk about medical savings accounts.

What we have to understand is that the key to HMO reform is simply this: timely access to needed medical services and the ability to enforce that right. That is what the Democratic plan would do, because it would give patients the right to sue HMOs when HMOs make decisions that deny their patients' rights and adversely affect their health care.

The Republican plan does not offer that benefit because they are afraid to take on the HMOs and the insurance industry.

Let me give my colleagues an example in my district. It is a typical example. A young man is in a bicycle accident. He faces facial disfigurement. His medical doctor says he ought to take a certain course of treatment, but the HMO says no, we are not going to pay for that treatment.

Let me tell my colleagues, if the HMO could be sued for failing to allow necessary treatment, they would change their tune. That is what the debate for HMO reform is all about. I hope we will adopt the Democratic approach.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is time to take stock of the 105th Congress. Despite a slim majority in the House, a Senate that lacks the 60 votes necessary to break a filibuster and a liberal Democrat in the White House, the Congress has managed to pass an historic balanced budget agreement, middle class tax cuts, and a transportation bill that addresses the needs for improved, safer roads in America.

But while Republicans are proud of that record, they are not satisfied. The cost of government is too great, Washington spending is still too careless, and education reform is being blocked by the usual suspects. The remaining time in the 105th Congress should be devoted to more progress in these areas.

The President has on his desk important legislation to help parents save for their children's education in the form of education savings accounts. Normally this would not even be controversial, but the special interests oppose it, and the prospects for the President signing it are slim.

That leaves us with more tax cuts and fiscal restraint. When it comes to tax cuts, Republicans believe in "more rather than less, sooner rather than later."

Of course, we intend to honor that pledge.

□ 1145

WHY IS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY PROTECTING THE HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANIES?

(Mr. ROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1